1892MNRAS..52..238.

died on June 23, 1891, leaving a large family by his first marriage, and a widow and two young children. He was elected a Fellow of this Society on May 11, 1860. J. L. E. D.

HENRY PRATT was born in Brighton on March 29, 1838, and was the eldest son of Mr. Henry Pratt, a naturalist and taxidermist of the same town. The son was almost entirely self-educated, but owed much to two years' instruction under Mr. Strugnell, of Christ Church School, Brighton, who helped to inculcate the love of study and to form the orderly habits of thought which Mr. Pratt showed in after years. By profession he was a watchmaker, and was esteemed for his ingenuity in works of mechanism and the skill which he could command in delicate workmanship. Astronomy, however, was his favourite pursuit, though all his studies in this direction had to be conducted at the close of a hard day's work in his business.

The instrument which he employed was a With-Browning reflector, with an excellent mirror of 8·15 inches aperture. He had a keen sight, and was a skilled draughtsman. These advantages, combined with indefatigable industry, enabled him to do much useful work, and he soon became known as an astronomer far beyond the limits of his native town.

During the partial solar eclipse of 1873 May 27, he was fortunate in obtaining observations of a portion of the Moon's limb beyond the disc of the Sun. In his first contribution to the *Monthly Notices* (vol. xxxiii. p. 577) he gave an account of his observation of this interesting phenomenon; the Moon's limb was seen to a distance of about 5 minutes of arc beyond the Sun's disc, of course projected upon the solar corona. The instruments were repeatedly changed, and it appears certain that the phenomena observed were not of instrumental origin.

Mr. Pratt was an assiduous observer of the lunar surface, and especially of the delicate markings and minute craterlets upon the floor of *Plato*, which he carefully studied. In 1877 he communicated to the Society some short but suggestive notes on *Mars*, accompanied by drawings which are preserved in the library. In 1880 he published a careful determination of the rotation period of *Jupiter*, which involved the observation of 321 rotations of the planet, and he showed reason for considering that the generally accepted rotation period was somewhat too short. In vol. xliv. of the *Monthly Notices* he gave the results of a series of observations of *Saturn*, accompanied by a fine drawing of the planet, and he appears to have obtained satisfactory observations of the innermost satellites, and of the fine division of the rings. In the same volume he published his observations of the *Merope* nebula in the *Pleiades*, which he was well able to see with his reflector, using a low-power Kellner eyepiece; with a slotted diaphragm to conceal the bright stars he even succeeded in seeing the faint patch of nebulosity

Downloaded from http://mnras.oxfordjournals.org/ at Serials Section, Dixson Library on June 7, 2015

© Royal Astronomical Society • Provided by the NASA Astrophysics Data System

1892MNRAS..52..238.

between *Merope* and *Alcyone*, first detected by Dr. Common with the 36-inch reflector.

Mr. Pratt was also a contributor to the *Astronomical Register* and other journals, and supplied regular weather reports to a local newspaper.

In August, 1890, his health having broken down, he decided, on the recommendation of his medical adviser, to leave Brighton and settle at Crowborough, Sussex. This intention he was never able to carry out, as his strength gradually failed, and on March 7, 1891, he died at Brighton, in the fifty-third year of his age.

He was elected a Fellow of this Society on April 12, 1872.

EDWARD WILLIAMS SNELL was born at Maker, Cornwall, in the year 1834. At the age of eighteen he went to Dr. Burney's School at Gosport, where he prepared pupils for the Army and Navy; and in 1859 he became mathematical master at the Royal Hospital School, Greenwich, from which post he retired in 1870. For the last eighteen years of his life he was conductor of a private school at Blackheath, where, owing to his untiring energy and the help he was always ready to give his pupils, he was particularly successful in preparing them for examinations, and gained their lasting affection. Mr. Snell had only just retired from work when he was attacked by a painful illness, which caused his death July 7, 1891, at the age of fifty-seven. He was elected a Fellow of this Society March 10, 1871.

EDUARD SCHÖNFELD* was born at Hildburghausen, in the Duchy of Meiningen, on December 22, 1828. His mother taught him to read, and he appears to have taught himself the rudiments of arithmetic. Later on, when he went to the Gymnasium of his native town, he could give assistance to the pupils of the highest classes in mathematics. Following the usual curriculum of the school, he remained two years in the senior class before attaining the legal age for the final examination. On leaving the Gymnasium, young Schönfeld expressed his desire to study astronomy, but abandoned the idea at the time, at the wish of his father, who considered it a profession without prospects, and, by the advice of his uncle, he studied architecture, first at the Polytechnical School at Hanover, and then at Cassel.

In the spring of 1849 he worked in the chemical laboratory at Marburg under Bunsen, but his former love for astronomy was revived by Gerling's lectures, and, making it his sole study, he translated the first book of the *Mécanique Céleste* and the *Theoria Motus* during his residence at Marburg. His first astronomical observation was an occultation of γ *Arietis*, made on November 29, 1849. In 1851 Schönfeld availed himself of an opportunity to visit the Bonn Observatory, and the charm of

---

* Abridged from an article by Prof. Krueger in *Vierteljahrsschrift*, Jahrgang xxvi., Heft. 3.

Downloaded from http://mnras.oxfordjournals.org/ at Serials Section, Dixson Library on June 7, 2015